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ACTION NFA-11

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ONY-00 SSC-00 /012 W
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C 181010Z FEB 79
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2262

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FOR NEA ONLY

E.O. 12065: N/A

TAGS: PINS, ASEC, AF, UR

SUBJECT: "NEW YORK TIMES" REPORTEDLY QUESTIONS SOVIET RESPONSIBILITY IN THE HANDLING OF THE KIDNAPPING OF AMBASSADOR DUBS

17. ON FEBRUARY 17, VISITING "NEW YORK TIMES" REPORTER TRUMBULL TOLD AN EMBASSY OFFICER THAT HIS NEWSPAPER HAD RECEIVED THE PREVIOUS DAY FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE A SIX-PAGE BRIEFING PAPER ON THE KILLING OF AMBASSADOR DUBS THAT WAS SO INTERESTING, AT THE "NYT" GAVE IT FRONT-PAGE TREATMENT. HE ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT EDITORS HAD "TONE DOWN" SOME OF THE DEPARTMENT-PROVIDED MATERIAL CRITICAL OF THE SOVIET ROLE IN THE INCIDENT, BECAUSE THEY FOUND IT TOO EXTREME AND NOT SUPPORTED BY THE AVAILABLE EVIDENCE.

2. IN RESPONSE TO TRUMBULL'S QUESTIONS ABOUT THAT POINT, HE WAS TOLD THAT EMBASSY OFFICERS DEFINITELY SAW SOVIET PERSONNEL AT THE INCIDENT SITE, OBSERVED THEIR ACTIVITIES, AND TALKED DIRECTLY WITH THEM FROM TIME TO TIME. THE AMERICAN OFFICER DID NOT, HOWEVER, HEAR ANY OF THE CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN THE SOVIET ADVISORS AND THE AFGHAN POLICE. TRUMBULL

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WAS ALSO TOLD THAT THE EMBASSY HAD NO WAY OF KNOWING WHAT

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INFLUENCE SOVIET ADVISORS ELSEWHERE IN KABUL MIGHT HAVE HAD WITH THOSE HIGH AFGHAN OFFICIALS WHO MADE THE OPERATIONAL DECISIONS.

3. REQUEST: MAY THE EMBASSY PLEASE HAVE A COPY OF THE SIX-PAGE BRIEFING PAPER TO WHICH TRUMBULL REFERRED? ADDITIONALLY, MAY WE PLEASE HAVE A COPY OF THE "NEW YORK TIMES" ARTICLE BASED UPON THE BRIEFING PAPER?
AMSTUTZ

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